

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 3, 2009

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,
Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
B 300 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Tiahrt:

We write to thank you for including funding in the FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Measure for the CDC's Gynecologic Cancer Education and Awareness Programs and respectfully request that your Subcommittee include \$10 million for the program in the FY 2010 Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. We understand that this year's funding constraints are significant, but we believe that this small amount of funding is warranted because -- given the nature of gynecologic cancers -- doctors, nurses and cancer survivors agree that providing more information about gynecologic cancers will save women's lives.

Every hour, approximately 10 women in the U.S. are diagnosed with a gynecologic cancer, such as ovarian, cervical, or uterine cancer. Each year, we lose over 26,000 of our mothers, sisters, daughters and friends to one of these terrible cancers.

This is a tragedy. Research shows that many of those deaths could be prevented if more women and the medical community knew the risk factors and recognized the early symptoms of gynecologic cancers so that they could be diagnosed earlier. For example, ovarian cancer has a 90 percent survival rate if detected in Stage One and only a 20 percent survival rate if detected in Stage Three or Four. Only 25-30 percent of ovarian cancer cases are currently diagnosed before Stage Three.

Gynecologic cancers can be detected early. In fact, a recent study found that 90 percent of women with early stage ovarian cancer had symptoms before being diagnosed. Regular pap tests are highly effective in detecting the pre-cancers that can lead to cervical cancer. However, women need to know what symptoms to watch out for, the need for yearly pelvic exams, and their family history so that they may make the best health care choices. The very nature of these cancers is intimate and oftentimes embarrassing. Building on the national education campaign that the Centers for Disease Control is developing with the funding we were able to provide last year will continue this

necessary dialogue and will provide vital information to women and the medical community.

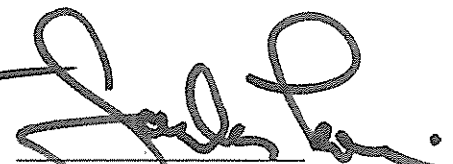
We hope you will support federal efforts to educate the public and health care providers about gynecologic cancers. Your support of Johanna's Law and the national education campaign will play a crucial role in preventing future and preventable gynecologic cancer deaths. We understand the tremendous fiscal constraints faced by your Subcommittee this year, but given the essential role these education programs will play in promoting women's health, we ask that this funding be a priority as the appropriations process proceeds.

Thank you for considering our views and please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

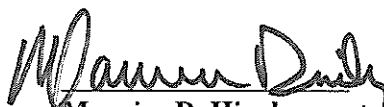
Sincerely,

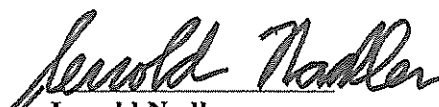

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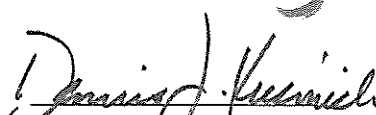

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